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HISTORY AND THE FINE ARTS
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BY

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ON THE OCCASION OF HIS INSTALLATION AS
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History and The Fine Arts

A few generations ago the chief interest of the historian was political; at present, with truer aim, he seeks to discover those more recondite, and frequently impersonal forces, which lie behind politics and dominate society. To this end he is utilizing the results of economic and sociological investigation; for the more remote periods and for the less civilized races he draws upon archæology, philology and anthropology; psychology is becoming more and more necessary to him; and comparative jurisprudence is aiding his institutional researches. With these investigations I am heartily in sympathy; I appreciate their necessity, their progressiveness, and the resulting gains in depth of knowledge and precision of historical technique. These studies, however, have tempted some writers to eliminate the human element in history unduly and to cultivate an inhuman detachment in its presentation. But since history results from the interplay of personal with impersonal forces, and is the record of human action and of thought in its direct influence on action, the historian should not be unmindful of the movement of *idéas*. He must, therefore, in the future, as in the past, cultivate the study of literature and the fine arts, the most adequate expression of the subtler spiritual and intellectual forces which have moulded human life. Thus only can he gain the human point of view and the power of sympathetic interpretation.

My purpose in this address is three-fold:

First, to emphasize the utility for historical purposes of certain classes of material—the purely literary or artistic—which the documentary historian is liable to overlook or deliberately neglect. Their employment is not congenial to him, for their primary interest lies in an alien field, and that, too, one which demands unusual æsthetic and emotional capacity as well as purely intellectual. Nor are they susceptible of strictly scientific treatment. The subjective element, the personal equation, is too great, both on the part of the original producer and of the historical critic. It is especially difficult to estimate the artificial effect of purely literary form. And yet the use of these materials is both legitimate and necessary, justifiable on theoretical as well as practical grounds.

Secondly, I desire to show that while, on the one hand, the application of the historical method to literature, science, philosophy and art is indispensable to the proper understanding of those subjects, so conversely the inclusion of scientific, literary and artistic data is indispensable to the fullest comprehension of history—not merely

“To point a moral or adorn a tale”

but to grasp the essential spirit as distinguished from the facts which are its external manifestations.

Thirdly, I shall attempt to characterize certain historical epochs, the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Catholic Reformation, partly for the sake of the characterization as such, partly to demonstrate the underlying unity of his-

tory, showing how one epoch springs from another, yet is differentiated from it, but chiefly as an illustrative exercise, to call attention to the "human documents" of various kinds which best reveal their spirit. And

1. *Value of the Historical Method as Applied to Literature, Science and Philosophy.*

I was first led to appreciate the value of historical method as applied to these various subjects through the influence of Hettner's *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur im Achtzehnten Jahrhundert* and the philosophical and literary writings of the late Professor Kuno Fischer.

For our present purpose the chief feature of interest in Hettner's work is his mode of presentation. First, he describes the political conditions which furnish the historical background of each literary epoch. Next follows a statement of **prevalent conditions, methods and forms of thought** in natural science and philosophy. Having thus exhibited the principal tendencies which affect literature and which literature reflects in form, content and ideal, he proceeds to develop his main theme, literature itself, treated in substance and as an evolution. Finally he sketches the state of the arts and of music, showing how the same tendencies which are at work in politics, science, philosophy and literature color the æsthetics of the period. As a result, the work reveals the great value of the application of the historical method and artistic illustration to the field of literature. Each age stands out in bold relief as an age possessing certain characteristic features and fundamental unities. To the work of individual authors is given a deeper meaning, for each one finds his own peculiar place in the development both of literary form and of human thought. His work ceases to be purely personal and local; it becomes universal, in the highest degree human and humanizing. Consider, for example, in the light of history, the speech, in that wonderful tragedy of Marlowe's, of the Good Angel to Faustus, "the incarnation of the Renaissance thirst for knowledge even at the risk of the soul":

"O thou hast lost celestial happiness
Pleasures unspeakable, bliss without end.
Hadst thou affected sweet divinity
Hell, or the devil, had had no power on thee!"

A sentence like this is not personal: it is age speaking unto age, and the tragedy of Faustus is not a personal tragedy, but the collision of the Renaissance with the mediæval world. Truly, as has been said, "Without literature, history is shorn of its life and color; without history, literature is shorn of its strength!"

In like manner Kuno Fischer's works, particularly his *Einleitung in die Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, impressed upon my mind the great advant-

age gained by literature and philosophy from the use of historical method and the inclusion of literary and historical material. Abstract thought was vitalized and even metaphysical abstractions obtained "a local habitation and a name." Philosophical problems and the achievements of natural science acquired a fuller meaning when they were brought into their human and historical connections. Kepler's laws of planetary motion, for example, received a new significance when they appeared as part and parcel of a scientific evolution which was destined to attack the entire local and sensuous basis of medieval theological doctrine. It became startlingly apparent that the results of great movements are never confined to one particular sphere.

This brief analysis of the results of the application of historical method to literature, philosophy and science has made it clear that added significance is thereby given to each line of work. Whether consciously or unconsciously employed, the historical method supplies the only means of testing progress. Developments in each sphere of activity occasion developments in others, but without the application of the historical method this could never be perceived.

Reversing the process, I proceed to discuss

II. The Necessity and Value of the Inclusion of Science, Literature and Art in History.

Among American historians the late Herbert Baxter Adams, Professor of History at Johns Hopkins University and chief founder of the American Historical Association, was pre-eminent in the catholicity of his interests and in his talent for both discovering and stimulating capacity in young men. It is to him that such men of light and leading as President Woodrow Wilson, Professor Jameson of the Carnegie Institution and the American Historical Review, Albert Shaw of the Review of Reviews, Professors Haskins and Turner of the historical department at Harvard, and Professor Vincent of Johns Hopkins, owe either their initial impetus, or later stimulation, to scientific pursuits. Professor Adams' whole career, by precept and example, attests the value to the historian of literary and artistic studies. Some three years before his death, he thus recorded his early formative experience: "In Germany * * * I devoted myself to the study of history in a broad and liberalizing way. I endeavored to become acquainted with great chapters of human experience in ancient, medieval and modern society. * * * Every semester I followed a course of lectures in some branch of philosophy and in some field of art history. The subjects of German and English literature had also their attractions. Most inspiring were frequent visits to the art museums, * * * under the guidance of * * * eminent men. * * * It was training in art and archæology, but it was also historical training, for, as Hermann Grimm used to say, 'Art is the very flower of history.' * * * The art idea for historical and educational purposes ought to be cultivated in every institution of learning," a sentiment which I heartily endorse.

History is as wide, territorially and chronologically, as the records of man's existence on earth. It includes in its scope all fields of human endeavor, in so far as these affect or manifest the actions of men. Theoretically, therefore, the inclusion of artistic and scientific data is not only justifiable, but necessary. The necessity is also practical. This appears with peculiar clearness to the author or instructor who is not concerned with the bare presentation of facts (related, unrelated, or obscurely related), but who endeavors to portray the spirit of an age, to gauge the power of a spiritual force, to descry the subtler agencies at work and the subtler forms of expression. The necessity is brought more closely home, when, in small space, he attempts to present the essential characteristics of an historical epoch. The full force of the necessity is felt, when he reflects that the result of great movements is never simple, confined to one sphere, but always complex, influencing others. The interrelation of the Renaissance and Reformation affords a striking illustration. In each of the movements which I now describe, a double set of effects will be noted: one, limited to the particular field in question; the other affecting, directly or indirectly, the course of the religious Reformation.

The literary Renaissance dealt primarily with philological science; but the Hebrew Grammar of Reuchlin and the Critical New Testament of Erasmus afforded a purer Biblical text, the indispensable prerequisite to the Lutheran Reformation. The same movement produced a secular view of life which diminished the authority of the clergy, undermined ecclesiastical ideas and ideals, and laid the intellectual foundations of a new religious epoch. Meanwhile, the development of historical method and the study of patristic literature were leading men to attempt the reconstruction of primitive Christianity.

The artistic Renaissance was a movement technically artistic; but it involved the redemption of art from purely ecclesiastical trammels, the substitution of æsthetic for religious interests, and the elaboration of natural and anti-ecclesiastical ideals. As Heine says, "The painters of Italy carried on a polemic against clericalism perhaps far more effectually than the Saxon theologians. The glowing flesh in the pictures of Titian is all Protestantism. The hips of his Venus are far deeper theses than those which the German monk nailed to the church door of Wittenberg."

The philosophical Renaissance was primarily a search for mundane truth, the reconquest of the ideal of knowledge for its own sake; it involved, however, the discovery of new standards of truth, *i. e.*, other than theological, and consequently issued in the overthrow of the medieval ecclesiastical philosophy, and, in one phase at least—Giordano Bruno—it assumed the form of pantheism and the deification of nature.

The geographical Renaissance was primarily the exploration of the globe in the interests of commerce; but it necessarily involved an attack on patristic geography and hence on orthodox theology. Its political effects in the religious

sphere were no less marked. Spain, for example, enriched by the treasures of Peru and Mexico and traffic with the Indies, was enabled to exercise an influence in the stormy days of the Catholic Reformation altogether disproportionate to her European wealth and population. It also completed an economic revolution. If it be true, as Ranke declares, that "the greatest event that meets us in the whole course of authentic history is the fact that the seats of the predominant power and culture have been transplanted to the Western lands and the shores of the Atlantic Ocean," this must be regarded as one of the few decisive moments in the annals of the human race. For it is in the regions chiefly affected in the way of progress—the shores of the Channel, the North Sea and the Baltic—that mankind has been slowly working out, throughout the modern era, its fundamental religious, intellectual and social problems. And still ever westward the Star of Empire takes its way.

The cosmographical Renaissance was primarily the scientific study of astronomy; but it involved the elaboration of scientific method, and when Copernicus "placed the sun upon the throne of the universe," he was at the same time beginning the first great duel between modern science and dogmatic theology. He attacked, and his successors overthrew, the whole local and sensuous basis of medieval Catholic doctrine as based on Ptolemy and Aristotle and enshrined in the scholastic philosophy. Contemporaries believed that "his pretended discovery vitiated the entire Christian plan of salvation"; and Protestant and Catholic were alike zealous against this new and godless scientific doctrine.

Literature and art are subject, then, to the great rule laid down. They produce or illustrate action outside of their own respective spheres, and must, therefore, be included in the realm of history. They must be utilized also because of their inspirational value. If it be true that "it is as much the function of the historian to vivify as to verify history," they offer the best means to this end. Both are emotional, passionate, offspring of the creative imagination: they are therefore peculiarly fitted to kindle the historical, or re-creative imagination, and beget that dramatic power and insight without which no historian can reach the summit of his art.

Their substantive value is equally apparent. In one sense, every piece of literature is an historical source, and not infrequently has literature been the source of historical action. Architecture, too, has made as well as illustrated history. It was partly because of her direct heritage from Rome that Italy became the parent of the Renaissance. Italy was not dependent for her inspiration upon literature alone; in her midst lay visible and tangible memorials of the classic past—coins, statues, columns, triumphal arches, tombs and temples—mighty mementos of a mighty race, for the untutored mind perpetual abodes of myth and legend, but perennial source of light to the investigator. Paintings are often illustrative of history and historical ideas. Portraits need no mention;

the likenesses of great men who represent great ideas or historical forces personify their studies or their deeds. The accessories of paintings are an index to civilization. They portray utensils, costumes, weapons, the humours of an age—its amusements and serious pursuits—styles of architecture, the state of scientific knowledge, the arts of war and peace. It is a collection of the paintings of an age which best exhibits its prevailing spirit: secular pictures predominate in a worldly age; ecclesiastical paintings in an age ecclesiastical. The basis of Italian art, to take an example, was medieval asceticism: such beauty as the earliest specimens possess is beauty of spirit, not form; they depict, says Mr. Lilly, "the sufferings of heroes of religion, faithful unto death and receiving the crown of life." Painting was in the service of the church and portrayed religious subjects. The later change in art attests a change of spirit and symbolizes it unconsciously.

The other arts in like manner contribute to historical knowledge, sculpture and music among them. Coins and medals with effigies, dates and inscriptions may have unique historical value. What a world of grim humor and disdain finds expression in the medal struck by Charles XII. of Sweden to commemorate the disgraceful flight of Peter the Great at Narva: "And Peter went out and wept bitterly"!

History and the arts maintain a reciprocal relation. The arts contribute to history, but history is required for the interpretation of the arts. Literature gives to history, directly or inferentially, about as much as it receives; the arts demand more, as a rule, than they yield in return. This is especially true of such works as embody abstract ideas.

III. The Characterization of Certain Historical Epochs—The Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Catholic Reformation, With a View to Subsequent Literary and Artistic Illustration.

History reveals the comparative progress or retrogression of the human race in civilization and culture. It is therefore natural for the historian to mark off great epochs in history. These divisions are arbitrarily chosen, yet are necessary for convenience; they are misleading, yet justifiable, because there actually exist broad distinctions between ages, as between midday and midnight. Each age has an atmosphere of its own, by which it may be distinguished from that which follows or precedes it. Such is the case with the period called the Renaissance. Sharply contrasting with medieval conditions, it is yet an outgrowth from them. A concise view of the state of Europe at the height of the Middle Ages makes this fact apparent. First, it appears that this period possesses an individuality of its own which contrasts sharply with the succeeding age, its offspring, the Era of the Renaissance. Secondly, that the height of the Middle Ages is best characterized by the citation of an ecclesiastical institution, the Empire Church of the Middle Ages, a politico-ecclesiastical movement,

the Crusades, and a dominant system of philosophy, Scholasticism. These three parallel phenomena synchronize exactly. Nor is this coincidence in dates accidental; the interconnection of the movements is essential. All three are characteristic of an age of the world in which the ecclesiastical principle is the highest principle, faith is superior to reason, and a cosmopolitan conception of a united Christendom is in the ascendant. Cosmopolitan ideas of world-church and world-empire are accepted, while nations (and national churches) have as yet no self-conscious existence. That a cosmopolitan conception of the brotherhood of man prevails as an active force in life is shown both by the Crusades, a universal politico-religious movement, and by the existence of chivalry, an institution with religious sanctions, in which, for example, French knight and German knight are bound together in a community of feeling far closer and more sympathetic than exists between a German knight and a German peasant.

Let me now demonstrate these propositions and contrast them with the spirit of the next succeeding age, the era of the Renaissance.

And first, the Crusades. The Crusades are a movement typical of an ecclesiastical age of the world, an age of faith, therefore sharply in contrast with the rationalistic and secular spirit of the Renaissance. They were based upon religious motives, armed pilgrimages, organized by the Popes, the spiritual heads of Christendom, for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. And yet—they aimed at a shadow, for reason would have told their participants, in words of Holy Writ, "He is not here, He is risen!"* The Crusades are also typical of an age in which strongly-marked nationalities are non-existent—sharply contrasted, therefore, with the nationalistic developments of the political Renaissance. And yet the Renaissance is, in part, a natural outgrowth of the crusading movement, owing to its stimulation of intellectual and commercial developments which were already under way.

The Empire Church, again, was a Church typical of an ecclesiastical age of the world. It claimed universal power, temporal as well as spiritual; popes dethroned kings, and churchmen governed states. Its organization respected no boundary lines; it was an international world-state, ruled by one monarch and possessing elaborate systems of appeal and taxation. As the most important single institution in existence at the height of the Middle Ages, it must be regarded as also the most characteristic. Absolutely remote from the national church idea, and allowing the individual no appeal from her authority, yet the Empire Church is indissolubly linked to the Renaissance and Reformation: to the latter through vain attempts to reform its abuses; to the former, through the philosophy and theology which it sanctioned, *viz.*, Scholasticism.

Like the Crusades and the Empire Church, Scholasticism is typical of an ecclesiastical age of the world: it contrasts therefore sharply with the Renais-

*Archer and Kingsford, *Story of the Crusades*.

sance and yet is a phase of intellectual development preliminary to it. Scholasticism has been defined as rational theology under the control of the Church. It was a mode of truth-seeking which sought to reconcile revelation and reason, faith and science. It resulted in the formulation of systems of universal knowledge, based on facts accepted by the Church and arranged in logical order. Scholasticism is the blood relative of the Empire Church. The Fathers of the Church, says Kuno Fischer, established both the faith of the Church and faith in the Church. "He cannot have God for his father, who has not the Church for his mother." "Outside the Church is no salvation." This is the basis of the power of the Church of the Middle Ages, the source of its consciousness of unconditional supremacy. The Church becomes the sole ladder between earth and heaven; the hierarchy reaches from earth to God. Subordinate to the Kingdom in heaven, is the Church on earth; subordinate to the Church on earth is the secular Empire on earth; subordinate to theology, learning divine, is secular learning, philosophy. Even the form of Scholasticism corresponds to the form of the Empire Church. The organization of the Church was systematic and hierarchical; the arrangement of dogma must be so also. The Fathers of the Church are therefore succeeded by the Doctors of the Church (the founders, that is, by the expounders of dogma), and these construct a system in consonance with Church requirements. What could be more harmonious than the rigid employment of the syllogistic form and method?

Scholasticism is at once the deadly enemy and the progenitor of the Renaissance; its enemy, because it bound knowledge with chains of matter and method; its progenitor, because it "introduced into the world the principle of the thinking spirit," and thereby became itself "the first movement of the Age of the Renaissance, its prediction and introduction."

Literature, then, manifests in form and substance the dominant characteristics of the Middle Ages, for, rightly considered, the scholastic philosophy is the great literary illustration of medieval life. Knowledge is disseminated by the clergy: monks are the medieval chroniclers; miracle-plays and mysteries are the medieval dramas; Hrotsuit, the nun of Gandersheim, wrote biblical comedies to displace the popularity of those of Terence.

The height of the Middle Ages is the golden age of monasticism. The Knights Templar are a double illustration of the epoch, for as monks they manifest the ascetic ideal of the ecclesiastical age, while as an institution, established to wrest the Sepulchre from unbelievers, they illustrate the crusading movement. Their destruction by Philip the Fair marks the close of the crusading age more truly than does the fall of Acre, the last stronghold of the Christians on the shore of Palestine. A tradition, current for centuries and now enshrined in literature, is the finest attestation of its effect upon the popular imagination. Every year, on the anniversary night of the abolition of the Order, there issued an armed figure from the Templars' tomb, wearing the red cross

on the white mantle, and crying, "Who will liberate the Holy Sepulchre?" And from the vault the answer came, "No one! No one! for the Temple is destroyed!"*

The art of the Middle Ages also enshrines its spirit. Its architecture is the sole form of art not surpassed by the Renaissance; and the pointed Gothic of its grand cathedrals is perhaps the best expression of the soaring devotional spirit of the Middle Ages. But medieval painting is no less characteristic. Its forms are as stereotyped as the scholastic syllogism, and it was no less devoted to the service of the Church. An eighth century advocate of painting declared at the Second Nicene Council, that "It is not the invention of the painter that creates the picture, but an inviolable law of the Catholic Church. It is not the painter, but the Holy Fathers who have to invent and dictate. To them manifestly belongs the composition, to the painter only the execution." "In the old times," says Ruskin, "men used their powers of painting to show the objects of faith; in later times [the Renaissance] they used the objects of faith that they might show their powers of painting." The change in art declares the change in spirit and symbolizes it unconsciously. The whirligig of time brought its revenges.

The noblest expression in literature of the central political conception of the Middle Ages—the theory of the Holy Roman Empire—is Dante's *De Monarchia*; its no less perfect expression in art is a fresco in the Spanish Chapel of Santa Maria Novella—that Dominican church where Boccaccio places the opening scene of his *Decameron*. The fresco has been described by Mr. Bryce in his great classic, but since it was my privilege to study the original, I feel that I may use my own description for purposes of illustration. The subject of the painting is the ideal theory of the Holy Roman Empire, symbolizing that cardinal medieval idea of exact parallelism between heaven and earth. In the center of the fresco at the top is Christ, the Lamb of God; at his right the seraphs, at his left the saints, among them Catherine, conspicuous with her lily. Immediately below the saints is ranged the adoring multitude of the Church Triumphant, who have just entered the heavenly gate where Peter watches and to which Dominic is guiding the pilgrims from the paths of earth. The foreground of the fresco is the Duomo of Florence as originally planned—its sole memorial—the type of the Visible Church. In front of it, and directly below Christ, sit—exactly on the same level and side by side—Christ's lieutenants on earth, the Pope and Emperor: the Pope at the left (as one faces the fresco) with the descending ranks of cardinals, bishops, doctors and the children of the church; at the right, the Emperor with the king of France, nobles and knights and the humble vassals of the state. At their feet—the feet of Pope and Emperor—are sheep (the faithful), attacked by raging wolves (heretics

*Ranke, *Franzoesische Geschichte*.

and schismatics) whom a pack of spotted dogs (*Domini canes*, hounds of the Lord) is driving away. The interpretation? Earth is the counterpart of heaven: as in heaven is enthroned Christ, who rules the saints and angels, and receives obedient homage from the Church Triumphant, so on earth are enthroned the Lord's lieutenants—Pope and Emperor—equal in their rights, who rule the secular and spiritual branches of the Church Militant and receive their obedient homage.

The Renaissance was restricted neither to intellectual phases nor to a single land. It embraced the whole process of transition in Europe from the medieval to the modern order. It was an age of political revolution and transition. It witnessed the decline of the Empire, that world-monarchy, and the corresponding rise of modern nations; it saw the decline of the Papacy, that world-church, and the corresponding rise of national churches. Then, too, began to pass away the monopoly of Latin, that world-tongue, the most appropriate vehicle of thought in the days of universal church and universal empire, and correspondingly vernacular literatures began to bud and blossom. Strong, and territorially-compact, monarchies came into self-conscious and aggressive existence. It was an age of social and economic revolution, in which western Europe passed from the agricultural and feudal stage to the industrial and commercial stage of modern times. At the same time the people rose to power and began to overthrow aristocratic and ecclesiastical supremacy in politics and to destroy the clerical monopoly of learning. Now began that fateful revolt of laity against the clergy, which issued in the Reformation. The map of the world was changed by Columbus and Vasco da Gama; the chart of the heavens was altered by Copernicus; while by the accompanying intellectual revolution, based on the Revival of Antiquity, and by the succeeding religious revolution, introduced by Martin Luther, man in seventy years received a new past and present, a new earth, new sky and sea, and even a new heaven. His body, mind and soul responded to the change.

Intellectually, the revival of antiquity, was the source of the movement's strength; and Humanism was the most characteristic and potent force at work in its creation. Roman influences were the most accessible; but it was the recovery of Greek which led directly to the decisive movement of the Reformation. "You are an elegant Latinist, Margaret," said the learned Erasmus to the daughter of the saintly More, "but if you would drink deeply of the Wellsprings of Wisdom, apply to Greek. The Latins have only shallow rivulets; the Greeks, copious rivers running over sands of gold. Read Plato, he wrote on marble with a diamond; but above all, read the New Testament. 'Tis the Key to the Kingdom of Heaven.'"* Nowhere does the contrast between the spirit of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance appear more clearly than in the

*Sandys, *Harvard Lectures on The Revival of Learning*.

ecclesiastical and the humanistic treatment of the classics, and nowhere does the literary illustration prove more apt. Imagine, if you please, St. Anthony, pattern of asceticism, revelling in Homer and burning with passion for Helen of Troy. Contrast with St. Anthony, Marlowe's Faust, the type of the Renaissance. As Helen, escorted by Cupids, crosses the stage, Faust utters that immortal rhapsody:

"Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.
Her lips suck forth my soul: see where it flees!
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for Heaven is in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.

* * * * *

O thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appear'd to hapless Semele;
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azured arms;
And none but thou shalt be my paramour!"

A second characteristic of the Renaissance is its note of individuality, of personal independence in thought and action. Man is no longer, as in medieval times, part of a great machine for ecclesiastical, social or political uses, without self-confidence or self-appreciation, living a hard and narrow life in the omnipresent fear of death—the man of the *Hora Novissima* or of the *Dies Irae*. The modern man is intensely individualistic. The architect of his own fortune, he thirsts for fame and glory—a desire which is distinctly a modern emotion and spring of action. In Petrarch's Dialogue, "His Secret," St. Augustine (medieval spokesman) declares that Petrarch's love for a woman, together with his longing for fame, are the two most conspicuous failings of the poet, barring his way to a higher life. "What have I done to you," indignantly says Petrarch,* "That you should deprive me of my most splendid preoccupations and condemn to eternal darkness the brightest part of my soul?" Exemplifications of this spirit abound in the literature of the Italian and English Renaissance. Dante, "in whom the first faint glimmer of the dawning Renaissance

*Robinson and Rolfe, *Petrarch*.

began to shine," allots a separate star to those who strive nobly to excel. Of Mercury he writes:

"This little planet doth adorn itself
With the good spirits that have active been
That fame and honor might come after them."

And again:

" 'Now it behooves thee thus to put off sloth,'
My master said; 'for sitting upon down
Or under quilt, one cometh not to fame.
Withouten which whoso his life consumes
Such vestige leaveth of himself on earth
As smoke in air or in the water foam.' "

Milton, in the zenith of the English Renaissance, repeats the note in Lycidas:

"Fame is the breath that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble minds)
To scorn delights and live laborious days."

And the same strain is repeated with a dying fall in the epitaph of Keats: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water." This is an illustration of the melancholy which is the counterpart of the thirst for fame, in view of the inevitable disproportion between efforts and results. It, too, is a mark of the Renaissance; Petrarch had it in large measure.

Another characteristic is the development of rationalism, the evolution of a critical spirit and method. The Renaissance thus had its scientific side, and furnished the substructure of modern material and intellectual life. The combined use of reason and freedom has been the guarantee of progress.

During the Middle Ages, "man had lived enveloped in a cowl." His hopes and fears were fixed upon the life hereafter. The ascetic ideal unduly sacrificed the present to the future. With the regained knowledge of antiquity, a change came in,

"Fresh with the youth of the world."

The fourth gift of the Renaissance to man was an appreciation of the beauty and comeliness, the value and uses of the present life. Hence the freshness of the period, its joyousness, its renewal of the springtide of life. In Italy, the

reaction, carried too far, produced the darker, pagan, non-moral side of the movement. Boccaccio's *Decameron*, frank and free, reveals both side of life: the fairness of the face of nature, the unbounded sensuality of an age destitute of moral standards. So, too, the *Carnival Songs* of Lorenzo, cynical, Horatian:

"Fair is youth and void of sorrow;
But it hourly flies away.
Youths and maids, enjoy today;
Nought ye know about tomorrow.

This is Bacchus and the bright
Ariadne, lovers true!
They, in flying time's despite,
Each with each find pleasure new;
These their nymphs, and all their crew
Keep perpetual holiday.
Youths and maids, enjoy today;
Nought ye know about tomorrow.

The highest ideal of the Humanist, the goal of the movement of which he was a part, was culture—the right of the individual man to the full and free development of all his powers. Its spirit is gloriously manifested in its reverence for literature. "Books have perished," is Petrarch's lament:

"This age of ours consequently has let fall, bit by bit, some of the richest and sweetest fruits that the tree of knowledge has yielded; has thrown away the results of the vigils and labors of the most illustrious men of genius, things of more value, I am tempted to say, than anything else in the whole world."

Here is the germ of thought which develops into Milton's golden saying, dear to the scholar's heart:

"Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. * * * as good almost kill a man as kill a good book; who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself. * * * a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, imbalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."

The hardest knowledge to acquire is self-knowledge. It begins with the consciousness of our separate existence and of our individual powers. It continues with the realization of individual ends to be reached and individual ideals to be attained—which is culture. The process culminates in the realization of our individual responsibility and the consequent formation of a religious ideal.

So through the secular byways of the Renaissance man passed along until he found himself confronted by what Charles Kingsley calls the problem of the ages: "Given self, to find God." This is the true relation of Renaissance to Reformation.

In Italy this point was not reached and the movement remained non-moral. Aesthetic interests dwarfed the religious and the Renaissance flowered in art. The Papacy is the characteristic institution of the epoch. In accordance with the spirit of the age its religious activities were temporarily obscured and secular aims prevailed. It is the era of the Borgia popes, the time of the reconstruction of papal temporal monarchy and the reorganization of the papal states. By lavish patronage of arts and letters the heads of the Church strove to achieve an intellectual and æsthetic primacy in Europe. Julius II. is the typical pope of the period. Reigning before the Reformation, he was the last pontiff to rule the undivided church with power unbroken, half-temporal, half-spiritual. A magnificent patron of art, his memory is indissolubly linked with the undying names of Bramante, Michael Angelo and Raphael. Warrior and politician, he was the founder of the modern papal states. The expansion of the domains of the Church and the expulsion of foreigners from Italy were his chief political aims. At the zenith of his power, two great leagues, opposing thunder-clouds, confronted each other in Italy. The one was headed by the foreign invader, Louis XII. of France—its unhallowed aim, the conquest of Italian soil; the other was a League called Holy, and its soul was Julius II. The noblest expression of his hopes—its official expression—is Raphael's contemporary fresco, the Room of Heliodorus in the Vatican. The subject is drawn from the Second Book of the Maccabees. Heliodorus, a robber, has seized and looted the Temple. In the background kneels Onias, the High Priest, before the altar, and prays for deliverance. In the foreground at the left, Julius II. is being borne into the Temple, while before him, foreground to the right, a horseman in armor, wielding a mace and assisted by two angels, has overthrown Heliodorus. The interpretation? Heliodorus, the robber, is the King of France; Julius II. is the divinely-appointed saviour of Italy. Sculpture embodies a similar conception. Michael Angelo's Moses, on the pontiff's tomb, is Julius II., leading the Italian people from a state of bondage to a freer promised land. Painting and statue do homage to the patriot; literature, in Michael Angelo's "Sonnet on Rome in the Pontificate of Julius II.," censures the moral taint which lurks behind the splendors of artistic patronage and political success—the subordination of spiritual to earthly interests. In bitterness of soul the poet writes:

"Here helms and swords are made of chalices:
The blood of Christ is sold so much the quart:
His cross and thorns are spears and shields: and short

Must be the time ere even his patience cease.

* * * * *

Now were fit time for me to scrape a treasure!

Seeing that work and gain are gone; while he

Who wears the robe, is my Medusa still!

God welcomes poverty perchance with pleasure:

But of that better life what hope have we

When the blessed banner leads to nought but ill?"

Here is indeed a Sonnet, a contribution alike to literature and art, religion, biography and history.

The period of spiritual stagnation which accompanied the Renaissance in Italy and whose results the poet so feelingly described, was followed in the sixteenth century by a determined effort on the part of the Church to regain its spiritual vigor and to recover its pre-Reformatory power and prestige. By the decrees of Trent its power of resistance was regained; a new spirit of earnestness, depth, enthusiasm had been generated, and lukewarmness transformed into zeal. A period of religious chivalry ensued. It is the age, in literature, of Tasso and Ariosto, the age of the knightly romance. This literary tendency becomes united with the religious movement. Loyola passed from the legends of Amadis of Gaul to those of St. Francis, becoming in turn knight of Mary and champion of Christ. The institution which best illustrates the chivalrous spirit of the new religious age is the Company of Jesus. The same all-conquering spirit of romanticism is revealed in painting. Classic repose and mere beauty of form ceases to satisfy; passion is demanded, and religious sentiment; art once more returns to the service of the Church. It is the day of Guido Reni. The transference of the chivalric ideal to the Church is shown most vividly perhaps by the association of the music of the age with the great religious movement. During the preceding period, church-music had degenerated. Its primary religious purpose was disregarded in favor of the claims of mere professional technique; themes were borrowed from vulgar tunes such as were sung in taverns; the words were unintelligible; and there was no devotion in it. Under these circumstances a Committee was appointed by the Council of Trent, and music put on trial for its life. The matter finally passed into the hands of the great composer John of Palestrina.* He was ordered to produce a trial-piece, which should satisfy both the spiritual and artistic requirements of the Congregation of Reform: otherwise, he was told, the Congregation would disband the choral establishments of the Church and forbid the current music. In a word, he must create a new species, or the art of ecclesiastical music would become extinct. Under the double pressure of artistic devotion and religious

*Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy*.

zeal, he wrote the celebrated mass of Pope Marcellus. It was the critical moment in the history of music: Palestrina created a new style, became the Savior of Church Music, and justly won his title "*Princeps Musicae*." His auditors were roused to emotions of rapture; and Pius IV. exclaimed, "Of such nature must have been the harmonies of the new song heard by John the Apostle in the heavenly Jerusalem, and another John has given us a taste of them in the Jerusalem of the Church-militant." Palestrina's music will ever remain the fairest type of the pure religious spirit of the Catholic Reformation, untainted by political ambitions, unstained by persecution.

It is not only in the service of the mighty, kings and pontiffs, that art performs its wonders; it may be the mute but eloquent witness of civic virtue, at once the inspiration and reward of local pride and patriotism. To the pilgrim of art, Florence is a Holy Land. In the days of the Renaissance, the fair city "seated beside the Arno's stream," honored her artists and they in return have immortalized her by works in marble and imperishable brass. No more exalted witness of civic aspiration exists than the commission issued in 1294 to Arnolfo del Cambio by the Commune of Florence. "Since the highest mark of prudence in a people of noble origin is to proceed in the management of their affairs so that their magnanimity and wisdom may be evinced in their outward acts, we order Arnolfo, head master of our Commune, to make a design for the renovation of Santa Reparata in a style of magnificence which neither the industry nor the power of man can surpass, that it may harmonize with the opinion of many wise persons in this city and state, who think that this Commune should not engage in any enterprise unless its intention be to make the result correspond with that noblest sort of heart which is composed of the united will of many citizens." An utterance worthy of the city destined to become the seat of the most brilliant culture seen in the world since the days of Periclean Athens! A spirit whose external symbols are splendid buildings, spacious libraries, and wondrous art-collections! An inspiration, worthy of all emulation, which we here should cherish in the youthful vigor of our city by the Sound where the fairest fruitage of the civilizations of all climes may mingle and abide; an ideal which we, the citizens of no mean city, should pursue and which our several institutions, already founded in the love of art and culture, are striving to attain!

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